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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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09/934,031

08/20/2001

Mary A. Ericksen

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07/27/2006

3M INNOVATIVE PROPERTIES COMPANY

PO BOX 33427

ST. PAUL, MN 55133-3427

EXAMINER

NORDMEYER, PATRICIA L

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1772

DATE MAILED: 07/27/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary****Application No.**

09/934,031

**Applicant(s)**

ERICKSEN, MARY A.

**Examiner**

Patricia L. Nordmeyer

**Art Unit**

1772

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --**  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 14 June 2006.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 15-22, 38-42 and 44-59 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 15-22 and 38-41 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 42 and 44-59 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 1/06.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Repeated Rejections***

1. The 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection of claims 44 – 47 and 59 over Seber in view of Harper et al. in the office action dated March 14, 2006 is repeated for the reasons previously of record as the arguments presented by the Applicant in the response dated June 14, 2006 are unpersuasive.
2. The 35 U.S.C. 103(a) rejection of claims 42 and 48 – 58 over May in view of Harper et al. in the office action dated March 14, 2006 is repeated for the reasons previously of record as the arguments presented by the Applicant in the response dated June 14, 2006 are unpersuasive.

### ***Information Disclosure Statement***

3. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on January 18, 2006 is being considered by the examiner.

### ***Response to Arguments***

4. Applicant's arguments filed June 14, 2006 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

In response to Applicant's argument that Harper et al. fails to disclose a single layer backing but has a support layer and heat softenable layer instead, the open language of the claim, i.e. comprising, allows the non-adhesive side of the article to have a coating in which the

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retroreflective heads are embedded. Therefore, Harper et al. does disclose a single layer backing (Figure 1, #13) that is covered by a coating in which the beads are embedded (Figure 1, #11).

In response to Applicant's argument that the use of the heat soften able layer to hold the retroreflective beads in place would have to be considered as the use of an additional adhesive, the abstract of the application states that "beads are melted into a first side of the backing". In order for the beads to be melted into the backing, doesn't the backing of the article have to be heat softenable?

In response to applicant's argument that there is no suggestion to combine the references, the examiner recognizes that obviousness can only be established by combining or modifying the teachings of the prior art to produce the claimed invention where there is some teaching, suggestion, or motivation to do so found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. See *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 USPQ2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988) and *In re Jones*, 958 F.2d 347, 21 USPQ2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992). In this case, both Seber and Harper et al. are directed towards making retroreflective articles containing retroreflective beads. Harper et al. discloses the beads being attached through embedding of a heat softenable layer.

In response to Applicant's argument that medical tape is more than an intended use shown by its application to the human skin, easy removability and non-woven backing, the Applicant's own claim 42 states the use of foam instead of non-woven material and Seber is

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directed towards an article applied to human skin that is removed (Column 1, lines 43 – 46).

With regards to the May and Harper et al references, easily removed is relative term with no clear limitations. Both references disclose elements that include adhesive to adhere it to objects, therefore have the ability to be removed.

### *Conclusion*

5. **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL.** Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Patricia L. Nordmeyer whose telephone number is (571) 272-1496. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Thurs. from 7:00-4:30 & alternate Fridays.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Harold Y. Pyon can be reached on (571) 272-1498. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Patricia L. Nordmeyer  
Examiner  
Art Unit 1772

*pln*  
pln

*Nasser Ahmad*  
NASSER AHMAD  
PRIMARY EXAMINER 7/26/09